

**THE SAFE INTERACTIONS ACT IS CO-LED BY REP. BRIAN FITZPATRICK (R-PA)
AND ENDORSED BY**

Fraternal Order of Police, United Way Worldwide, the ARC of the United States, National Disability Rights Network, National Federation of the Blind, Autism Society of America, Association of Rural Independent Living Programs, National Association of the Deaf, TASH, ACHIEVA, ANCOR, A.J. Drexel Autism Institute, Autism Connection of Pennsylvania, Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association of Pennsylvania

WHY DO WE NEED THE SAFE INTERACTIONS ACT?

Law enforcement officers must be prepared for interactions with people with disabilities, yet the training they receive is often minimal and varies greatly by agency, state, and region. The limited available research has found that people with disabilities are more than two and a half times more likely to be victims of a crime and three times as likely to be victims of a serious crime than people without a disability. These occurrences of crime victimization lead them to have an increased number of interactions with law enforcement officers, who may be unprepared or lack knowledge about the best approach to communicate with people with different disabilities. These interactions can end fatally. A [report](#) from the Ruderman Family Foundation found that people with disabilities make up between one-third and one-half of all people shot by law enforcement officers in 2015. These findings further demonstrate the need for increased and continued training to protect both law enforcement officers and the communities they serve.

WHAT WILL THE SAFE INTERACTIONS ACT DO?

- Create a grant program to provide funding to non-profit disability organizations to partner with law enforcement agencies to administer enhanced training programs for law enforcement officers about interactions with people with disabilities.
- The trainings will include self-advocates in the development and implementation of trainings, including a diverse group of disability types such as intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health disabilities, and sensory and/or physical disabilities.
- The trainings will be a minimum of eight hours for new law enforcement officers, including four hours of interactive sessions led by trainers with disabilities, and at least four hours of training every year for existing law enforcement officers.
- Establish an advisory council, chaired by a person with a disability, to oversee the training program development and implementation.